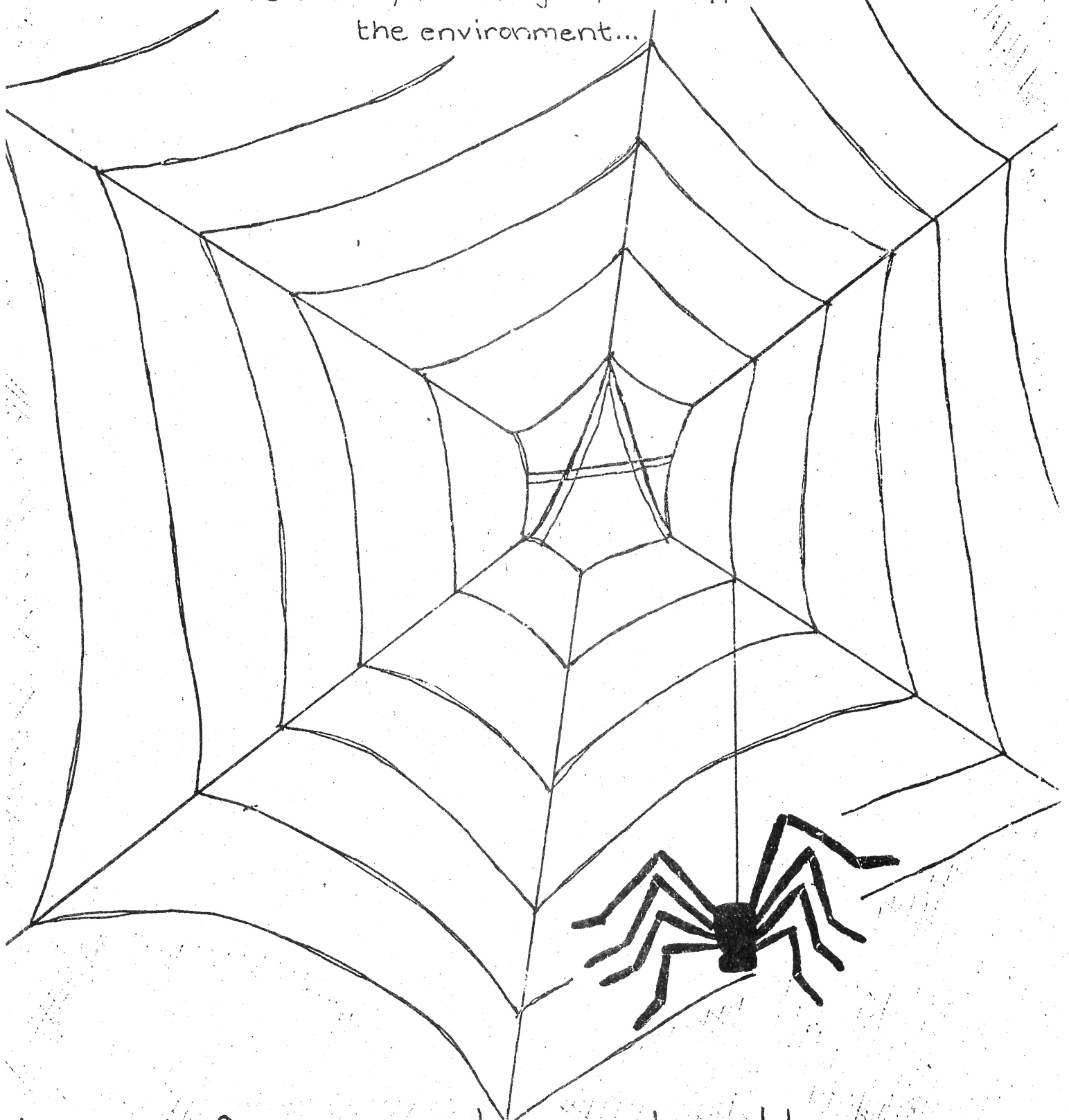


Issue One.

the web

a magazine discussing
feminism, animal rights, anarchy,
the environment...



this issue: feminism and animal rights



The WEB

The Web is a magazine which looks at the issues of feminism, animal rights and environmentalism from an alternative viewpoint. Hopefully it will encourage you to see the connections between these issues and identify patriarchy as the main driving force behind the oppression of animals, nature and women. The Web will also discuss these issues separately.

If you wish to contribute any articles, poems, stories, pictures etc, feel free to (keeping in mind the spirit of the magazine, as described above) by writing to our post office box.

Subscription to The Web is free (by donation). If you wish to send us a donation, make money orders payable to The Web magazine.

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Animal Rights
PO Box 1488
Strawberry Hills NSW
2012

If you would like more information on animal rights issues, veganism, vivisection etc, please write to us at the address above.

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The Club, The Yoke and The Leash

What we can learn from the way a culture treats animals.

Aviva Cantor

Nowhere is patriarchy's iron fist as naked as in the oppression of animals, which serves as the model and training ground for all other forms of oppression.

Its three basic strategies - the club, the yoke and the leash - operate similarly in the oppression of women and minorities. The club strategy is to kill animals for gain, sadistic pleasure, and the "affirmation of manhood". It is the domination through brute force. The yoke strategy is to domesticate animals to carry burdens and pull vehicles, supply eggs, wool, and milk, and provide flesh and skins. It is domination through enslavement.

The leash strategy is to tame animals to provide the psychic benefits of direct rule of master over pet. It is domination through deceit.

The Club

In the Stone Age, when humans feared and respected wild animals, the club - brute force augmented by lethal tools - enabled hunters to wipe out entire populations they did not necessarily require as food but considered threatening. Later periods of history, hunting became a popular sport, at times functioning as a symbol of ruling - class power and hedged with restrictions. Today its practitioners include lower class men, as well as upper - class red - coated patricians, who derive a "thrill" from this safe reenactment of the primitive hunt.

Present-day hunting of animals with high-powered rifles, snowmobiles, helicopters, and poison - tipped arrows does not give the animal a chance. But the hunter is not interested in a real contest, only in winning. The animal heads, antlers, or feet that hang prominently in men's dens and - clubs, significantly called "trophies", demonstrate "victory" over the wild that brings men status with their peers.

Hunting animals for sport is training ground for callousness, cruelty and insensitivity; it teaches men not to feel anything when they kill or maim a living creature. It is a surprisingly close progression from hunting animals to hunting and torturing people - catching and lynching blacks or "smoking out" Jews

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during the Holocaust. When the protagonist of The Deer Hunter returns from the slaughter of Vietnam and goes hunting with his buddies, he cannot bring himself to kill a deer. He has sensed the connection between the ease of killing deer and the ease of killing people, and wants no more of either.

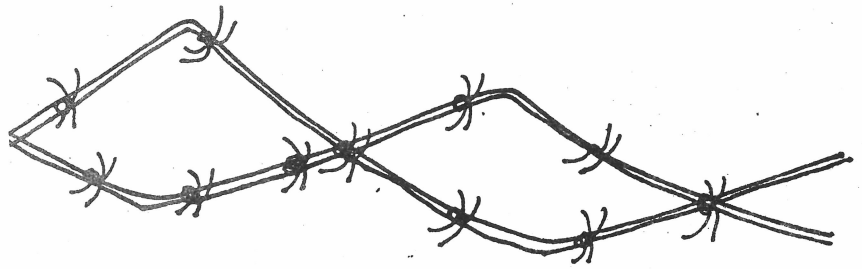
A second club strategy against animals is the abuse of animals in pornography. Harriet Schleifer, a founder of Montreal's Women Against Pornography and an executive director of the Animal Liberation Collective in Quebec argues that bestiality is by no means a fringe interest in pornography but has whole books, magazines, and films devoted to it. "Pornographic sex involving animals is brutal and exploitative", she writes, "with animals sexually abused and often ritually killed on film [animal snuff movies] all for the gratification of men with a taste for fantasizing about such things."

Vivisection - experiments on live animals - is a third category of crimes against animals under the club strategy. In the U.S. alone more than 100 million dogs, cats, primates, rabbits, rodents, and other animals are tortured, maimed, and killed each year in the interest of "scientific" medical and psychological experiments and teaching. The science establishment insists that such experiments are necessary, although the health of the nation has not been improved significantly in the past 50 years. A vast number of experiments have been performed countless times with only a slight variation to merit a new federal grant or Ph.D. thesis, and despite the increasing availability of alternative methods of research.

The prime function of vivisection labs is to serve as the training camps for society's scientific authorities, the high society's scientific authorities, the high priests of medicine and mental health. Learning to suppress feeling, sensitivity, and emotion is a large part of their hidden agenda. Hans Reusch writes the following in Slaughter of the Innocent, about one Nazi experiment on POWs: "Many of the prisoners screamed as parts of their body froze, But the performing doctors were used to screams from the animal laboratories."

Moreover, every zoology major, every biology and psychology graduate student, and every doctor and psychiatrist is required to perform vivisection in order to qualify for a diploma or license. (A tiny percentage refuse.) Having proved themselves callous, insensitive, and unfeeling - and able to keep their mouths shut, because what goes on in government-funded labs is kept

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secret from the tax-paying public - patriarchy's fortune healers are deemed worthy of practicing their skills on people. Though some may manage to transcend these experiences, too many retain the callousness they learned in the vivisection labs. The German doctors on trial at Nuremberg explained that since they had practiced animal vivisection, it was "logical" that they wished to practice on human beings as well. The popularly held myth that vivisection was outlawed in Nazi Germany makes people afraid that the outlawing of experiments on animals will inevitably lead to experiments on people, and therefore believe vivisection must be supported.

The destruction of hundreds of animal nations and the killing and maiming of individual animals have their parallel in gynocide, the murder of women. Examples of gynocide, numerous in history, include the burning of an estimated nine million women as witches in the Middle Ages in Europe. Significantly, animals were often executed at the same time, as witches' "familiar".

Another example of the club strategy of brute male power applied to human females is, of course, rape. Rape, especially gang rape, strikingly resembles hunting. Both feature the stalking of the prey, the cruelty and the thrill of the capture and the kill, the degradation of the victim, and the enjoyment of the victim's terror and defeat.

Anrea Dworkin, in *Pornography : Men possessing Women* (Pedigree), describes a photograph that illustrates this parallel. The photo, captioned "Beaver hunters", shows a naked woman tied with rope to the hood of a jeep in which two men dressed as hunters sit with rifles. The text under the photo reads: "Western sportsmen report beaver hunting was particularly good ... during the past season. These two hunters ... told Hustler that they stuffed and mounted their trophy as soon as they got her home."

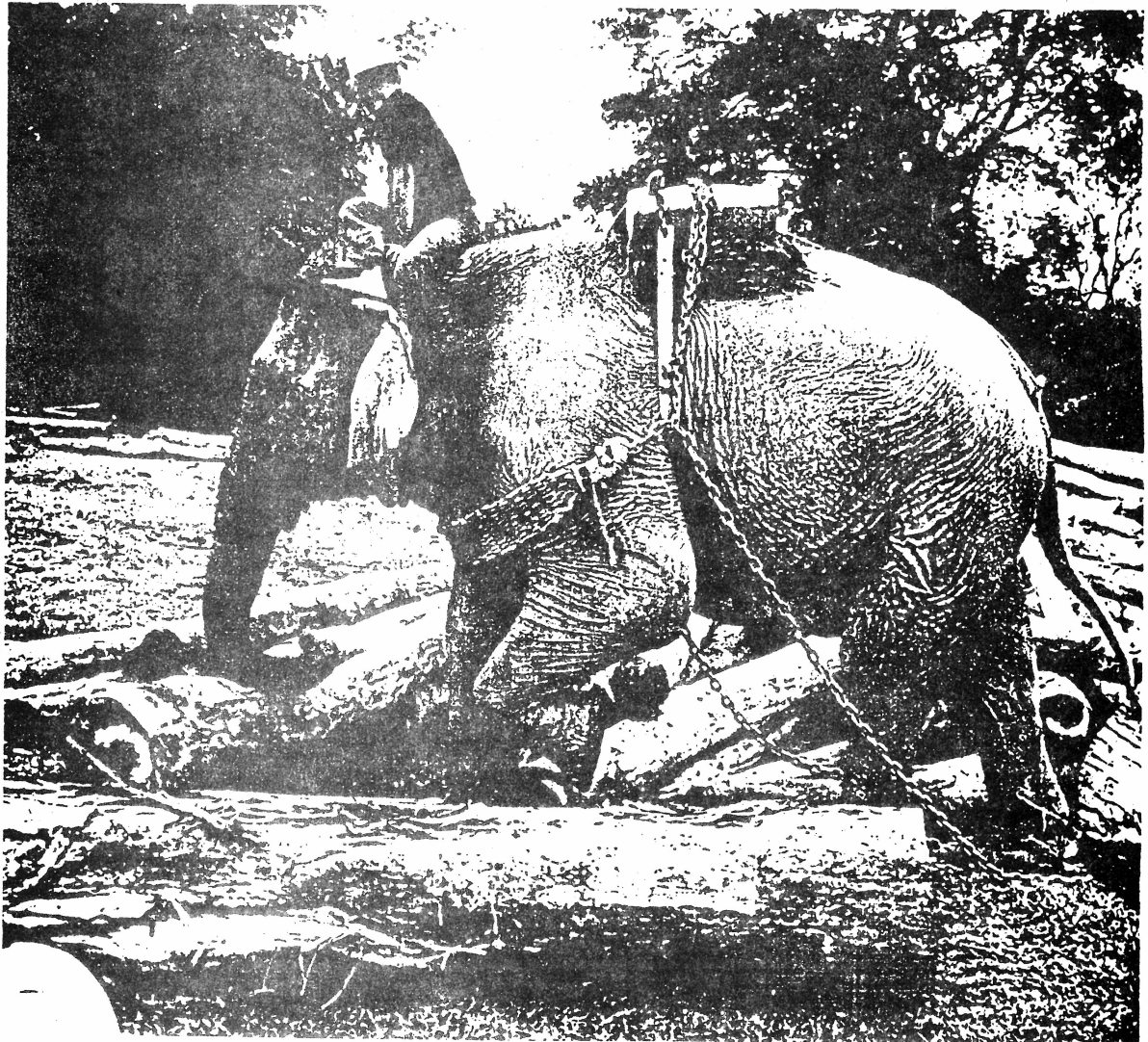


The Yoke

The domestication of animals during the Neolithic Age was a long process whose origins are the subject of debate among prehistorians and anthropologists. Whatever its origins, the methodology of domestication involved limitations of movement, castration, and forced breeding to create what are essentially new species.

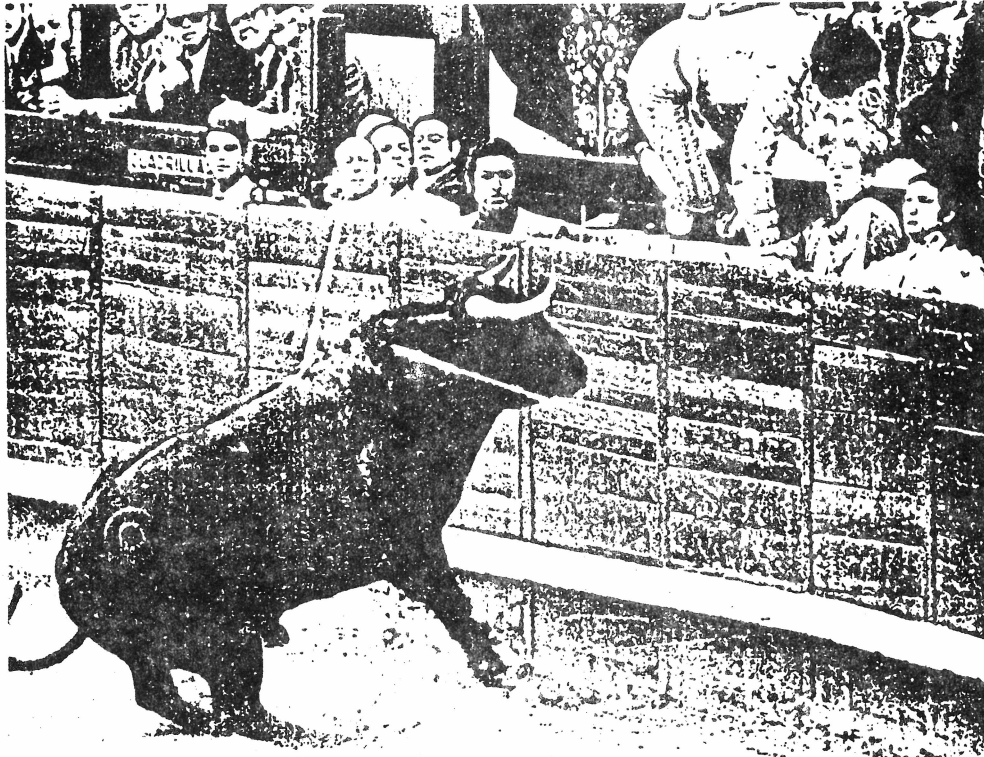


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Bullfights and rodeos are attempted reenactments of the drama of the domestication and subjugation of animals. The bull, traditionally and significantly the symbol of fertility, is the strongest and therefore most dangerous of the domesticated animals in the West. The bullfight, writes Phillippe Diole in *The Errant Ark*, "is a ceremony in which everything has been planned to bear witness to man's superiority over animal", and this is its main purpose. It is therefore not important that the bullfight is fixed and resembles more than anything else, a public execution.

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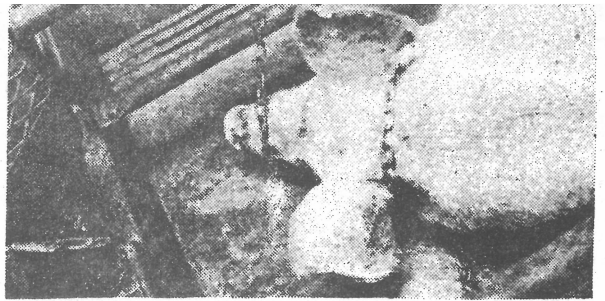
The rodeo is the American version of the bullfight, reenacting the drama of "breaking" horses and steers on the frontier range. Here, too, the challenge from the animal is made to appear real. Spectators may not be aware - but participants do know - that the horses and steers are made to perform by a bucking strap around their flanks and pulling it tight while releasing it into the arena. In "steer-busting", the purpose is to smash the animal to the ground with such violence that it remains stunned long enough to have three of its feet tied; one out of 15 steers is crippled or killed in the process.

Domestication required that animals be enclosed in a limited space and prevented from moving around and escaping to breed freely and find food other than provided for them. Enclosing animals as prisoners in fenced-off areas led to the eventual loss of their survival skills. Limitation of movement produced similar results for the domestication of women.

Another domestication method involved forced selective breeding for small size, docility, and dependency, juvenile traits artificially made to persist into adulthood.

In today's cruel factory farming, the animal is synthetic to the point of being a meat-, milk-, or egg-producing

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machine, and is treated as such. Confinement of animals has escalated to the point where they do not even have the minimum semblance of the life of their ancestors. Calves live in allocated 16 weeks in 22 hours a day of darkness, chained in a cage in which they cannot move. This treatment produces tender veal. Hens are so crowded under lights shining 18 hours a day (to increase egg production) that some may peck each other to death if not debeaked. Cows have been so altered by selective breeding to increase milk production that their udders require brassieres to prevent them from dragging on the ground.

Genetic engineering is the final state on the continuum patriarchy's control over the reproduction of domesticated animals. If science actually becomes able to design from scratch how animal species will look and behave, then men will indeed have become "as gods".

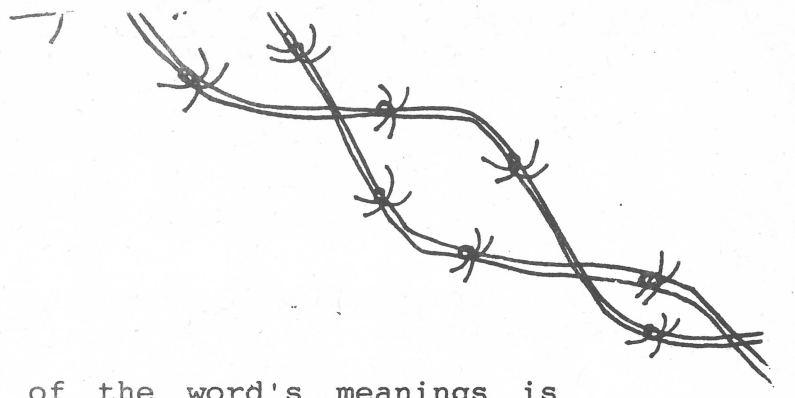
Control over reproduction has also been crucial to men's goal of creating a domesticated human female. By gaining control over whom women mated with, when, and under what circumstances, they were thus able to create a gender close to their own specifications. Because control over reproduction is the key element in the domestication of women, opposition to women's control over it is most extreme and most violent.

The implications of this domestication are terrifying. For if, over the millenia, women were selected for docility, this trait - albeit supplemented by female infanticide and buttressed by "feminine" socialization - may have become embedded in the female genetic structure along, of course, with positive traits women developed to resist/survive oppression, such as cooperation, endurance and sensitivity. However docility tendencies can be overcome; many domesticated animals, such as horses, revert to their origins if they break out of the confining environment. The lesson for women is obvious.

The Leash

The third patriarchal strategy is to make an animal a "pet". Since prehistoric times people have kept and developed warm bonds with companion animals, but the difference between a companion animal, whose nature and needs are respected, and a pet is that the pet lives with people on a real or invisible leash on suffering.

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On the surface, a pet (one of the word's meanings is "favourite") seems to be an exception in the man/animal relationship predicated on power and force. A man may club rabbits, poison coyotes, torture raccoons, deliberately run over squirrels, shoot feral cats with BB guns, run down wolves in a snowmobile, paralyze deer with poison tipped arrows, and devise scientific ways to make monkeys insane - and come home and pet the dog. What the pet is, actually, is a token. And, being a token, its status can deteriorate at any moment. It is marginal, allowed to exist in the interstices of human society if it fulfills human needs. Unlike the "wild" animal, it has no defenses. Unlike the slave animal, it lacks economic value.

More even than the domesticated slave animal, the pet is a creature totally dependent on its master for food, shelter, and protection. It is a "living toy". Bred to be docile and responsive, deprived of survival skills, it would be unlikely to live very long in the wild or in the asphalt jungle, as we know from the short and unhappy lives of abandoned and lost pets and strays.

"A pet", wrote Dirole, "is a sovereign remedy against feelings of inferiority or rejection ... and our ... psychological defense against women who reject us, employers who do not appreciate us, our competitors ...". Some men need dogs, he continued, "in order to convince themselves they are figures of authority." And Thorstein Veblen wrote that the greater the status accruing to its master, who shows he can afford a creature with no immediate economic value."

Unlike the slave animal, which has been designed by selective breeding to work for humans, the pet, while also a creation of selective breeding, requires obedience training in order to be responsive to the individual owners. One of the thrills of being a pet owner is to show off "tricks". The "wilder" the animals nature, the greater the prestige of having it perform.

Just as an animal chosen as a slave plays a different role from the animal chosen as a pet, so, too, is the case with the woman-as-pet. Of course there is some overlap to functions.

Significantly, child psychologist Boris Levinson comments in Pet-Oriented Child Psychotherapy that the domesticated animal caters to man's body; the pet to man's psyche. "That occasionally animals had dual or

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overlapping roles was as inevitable as the human [sic] confusion between wife and mistress."

The pet-woman is trained to be dependent and helpless, accommodating, incapable of distinguishing or striving to fulfill her own needs, fixated on her master as provider, protector, rescuer. She is programmed to be terrified of the outside world and also to find it uninteresting. Her entire environment is her master. Woman-as-pet supplants woman-as-slave in situations where the uselessness of household members is proof of the master's wealth and power. As a token, the pet-woman is treated differently from other women, a privilege earned by good behavior.

Taming animals into pets has provided useful techniques for taming women into pets. For instance, restriction of movement is essential. For pet animals, there are ropes, leashes, collars, and muzzles; for pet women, there was foot-binding - which ensured, in Dworkin's words, "a nation of women who literally could not run around" - garments such as corsets, which hindered movement, plus locations made unsafe and "immoral" by men, from which women must restrict themselves.

A second way of pet training is to take away the animals' natural activities. For women, this meant taking away the natural human activity of labor. A third technique of taming involves keeping the animal away from its own kind. Pet-women, each secluded in her own private home, are encouraged to compete with and distrust other women, and to focus on the master.

As with pet animals, the reward-and-punishment system molds individual women to their master's specifications. The main reward for good behavior is "love" and material objects. Punishment ranges from withdrawal of "love" and financial support to threats of abandonment, physical abuse, and rape.

A final parallel between pet animals and pet-women is the show. The human equivalents of the pet show are "coming out" parties to exhibit nubile upper-class pet-women, and beauty contests on a local to international level.

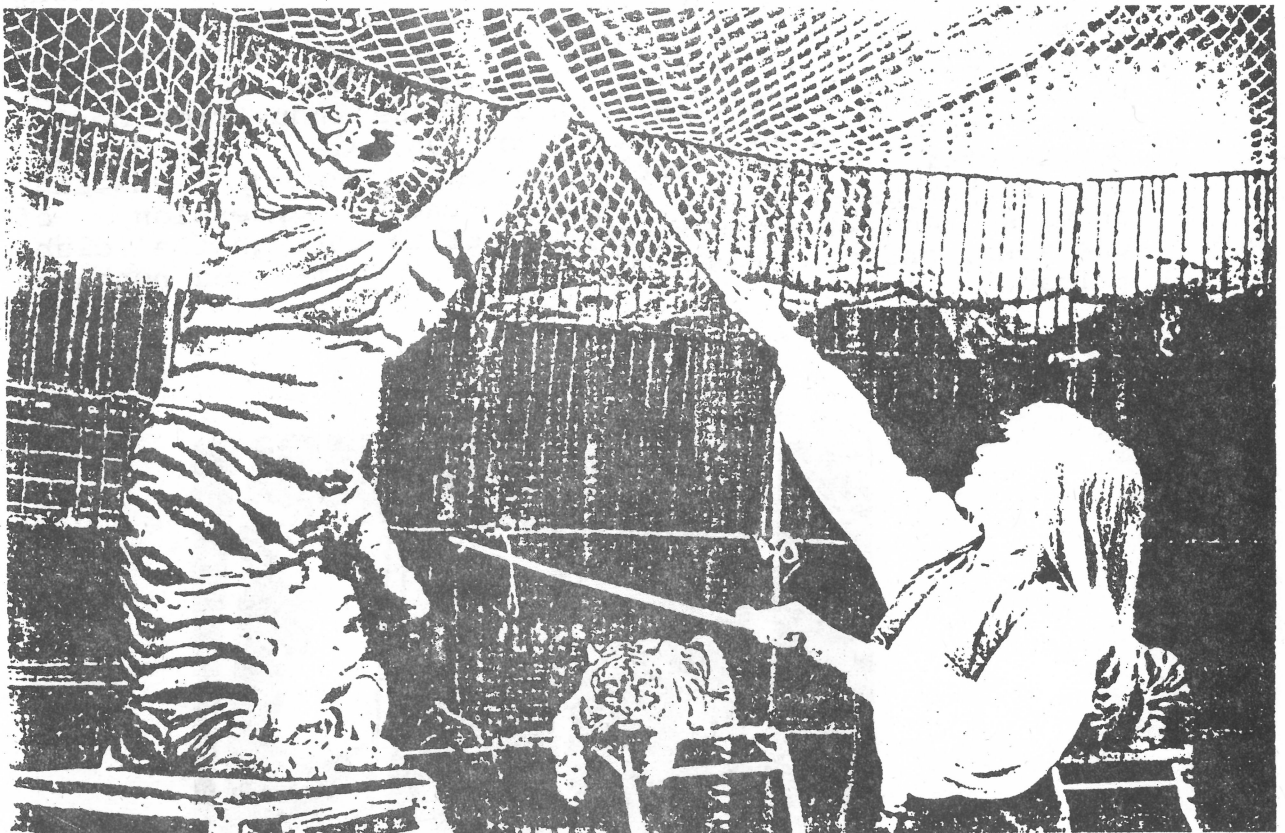
Many psychologists have observed that young children readily identify with animals. Therefore, in our culture, it is necessary to program children, especially boys, to oppress animals. The programming continues throughout life via constant unremitting

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propaganda designed to make animals unreal, frightening or disgusting.

The pets given to children to "train" (i.e., control and dominate) at an early age often serve to detach them from the animals, despite parents' often good intentions. Children's cute stuffed animals often serve to teach them to view animals in an unreal way, much as dolls teach girls to view babies and females as objects and toys.

Circuses and zoos seen as entertainments primarily directed to children, degrade animals, giving social approval to the domination of animals by force, and also serves to make animals unreal. As Maureen Duffy Observes in her essay in *Animals, Men, and Morals* (Grove), in the mid-19th century heyday for the circus coincided with the dissemination of popular evolution theories that shook previously held beliefs in human uniqueness. It was at this time, she says, that circuses began to feature humans' "lesser cousins...seen trying to ape [a man] and failing [so] that his mastery of them should be demonstrated..." and his imitators shown to be pitifully inept".



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Zoos, despite all the best efforts of progressive curators and educators, most often resemble prisons or the mental asylums one visited in the 17th and 18th centuries for an entertaining Sunday afternoon. Children learn that it is all right to capture and pen animals up for life as long as humans are entertained or "educated" by the spectacle.

Domesticated animals are made objects of disgust to justify their enslavement; the pig is dirty, turkeys too stupid to come in out of the rain. Pets that are not as subservient as pets should be - cats, for example - are described as unfriendly, selfish, sneaky.

These feelings of disgust and hatred can be transferred to humans by equating them with animals. Derogatory names for women include such insults as cow, bitch, hen, shrew, dumb bunny, goose, dog, bat, crow, and vixen, and the adjectives mousy, horse-faced, and catty. Colloquial sexual names include bird (British), chick (white American), and fox (black American). Women's genitals are called "pussy" and "beaver". Similarly, blacks are called "coons" and "jungle bunnies", and Nazi propaganda equated Jews with "vermin".

Propaganda against animals bombards us from the hunting lobby, the science establishment, agribusiness, the fur industry, the pet profiteers, and the entertainment media, where where animals are often abused for the pleasure of spectators. While these industries derive profit from the exploitation of animals, it is the patriarchal system itself which benefits, sustains and recharges itself through the oppression of animals. And when patriarchy benefits through the club, the yoke, and the leash, all animals - human and nonhuman - lose.



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Susan Griffin from Woman and Nature:

COWS

The Way We Yield

She is a great cow. She stands in the midst of her own soft flesh, her thighs great wide arches, round columns, her hips wide enough for calving, sturdy, rounded, swaying stupefied mass, a cradle, a waving field of nipples, her udder brushing the grass, a great cow, who thinks nothing, who waits to be milked, year after year, who delivers up calves, who stands ready for the bull, who is faithful, always there, yielding at the same hour, day after day, that warm substance, the milk white of her eye, staring, trusting, sluggish, bucolic, inert, bovine mind dozing and dreaming, who lays open her flesh like a drone, for the use of the world.

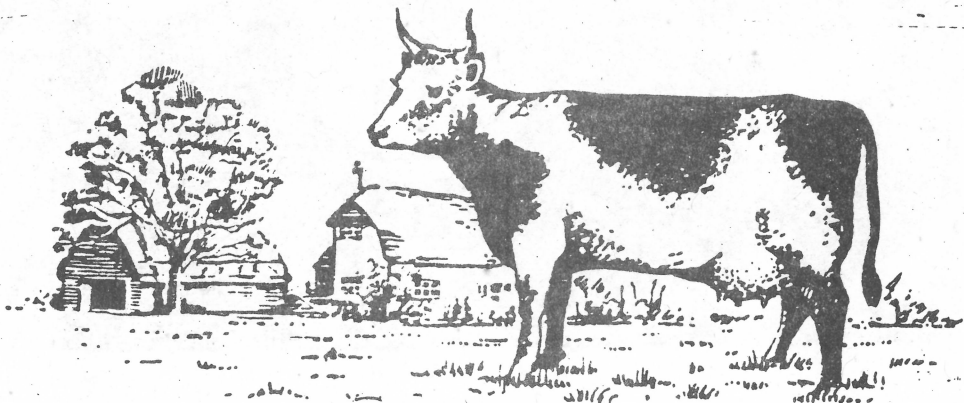
Appearance

The shoulders are molded within the steeply oval outline which confines the upper part of the body, so that their smooth, sharply tapering curve offers no resistance to the fluids progress of the rhythmic contour around the form. The arms continue the shoulder line almost without modification The hands suggest the pattern of a slender urn, from which fingers break into small elongated serpentine.

"On the Madonna of the Long Neck"
S. Freedberg,
Parmiginino: His Works in Painting

All animals should be taught to pose.
Yapp, Dairy Cattle

She must have a feminine appearance and an absence of tendency to lay on fat. She should be in good flesh but not beefy. Her chest broad and deep, shoulders within, vertebrae and hips prominent and firm, muzzle large, mouth broad, nostrils large and open, head erect, neck slender her eye alert and placid, her hips wide apart and level, her skin mellow, her hair...



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Her Breeding

Glad us maiden, mother mild
Through thine ear thou were with child
Gabriel he said it thee.

Anonymous, 13th century lyric

Her breeding will, during the next twenty years, become more and more scientific. Already we are seeing the results of the work of geneticists in the poultry industry, and the breeding of dairy cattle is rapidly following on similar lines....

Sir William Slater, "Farm as a Science-Based Industry"
The World in 1984, Vol. 1

She is bred for the fat in her milk. The sire is chosen through a measure of the fat in his daughter's milk. The calf whose daughter's milk may be unworthy is eliminated as a sire. (He is approached in the standing position. Two slits are made in the bottom of his



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scrotum; the testicles are drawn out; the cord for each testicle is broken or severed. The end of the cord is touched with a hot iron. Or the cord is cut with an instrument which crushes the end of the cord as it is cut.)

One bull with superior genes may sire thousands of calves without servicing a single cow. The sperm of a sire may be introduced into the vaginal canal of a cow one thousand miles away. Even the ovum can be transported. One may extract a fertile egg and place it in the belly of a rabbit. The rabbit may be carried great distances or even flown across oceans. (Afterward, the egg is extracted from the belly of the rabbit and introduced into the womb of another cow, who will bear the calf.)

Udder

Beata cujus ubera
Summo repleta munere
Terris alebant unicam
Terraе polique gloriam ...

(Thou whose blessed breasts, filled with a gift
from on high, fed for all lands the unique glory
of heaven and earth)

Bede, "Adesto, Christie, Vocibus"

It is not difficult to appreciate that a cow's
udder is highly important to a great industry
and even to the welfare of the peoples of the world.

Yapp, Dairy Cattle

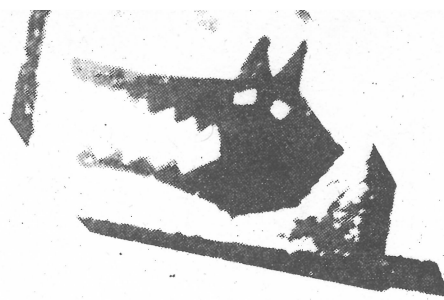
The udder should be held snugly to the body and be
of good texture. It should not be too large in size lest
it be subject to injury. Large meaty udders that hang low
and swing back and forth as the animal walks are an
inconvenience. They are more difficult to milk than the
well-formed udder.

Milking

He gives the kiss she has longed for...and so great is the
power of that kiss that at once she conceives
and her bosom swells with milk...

Bernard of Clairvaux, In Cantica Canticarum

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There is more than one kind of milking machine. In one using suction, the teat cups are rigid and have no liners. The upper rim of the teat cups is fitted with a rubber gasket which forms an airtight contact with the base of the teat. (Several sets of teat cups of different sizes are needed to fit different sets of teats). The a vacuum is applied which draws the milk from the teat while a pulsation opens and closes the line.

Another machine works with the aid of atmospheric pressure and uses a teat cup with both a rigid outer wall and an inner wall of elastic rubber, with an airtight chamber between these two.

(If the cow experiences difficulty in letting down her milk she may be injected with oxytocin, the hormone science has discovered to be responsible for this process)

Preparing the cow for this process will take .42 minutes. It will take .20 minutes to rise and attach the milking units, .20 minutes to place the teat cups on the cow, 1.27 minutes to machine strip the cow, .06 minutes to move the milking cart from cow to cow, and .18 minutes to replace the head on the pail. Both the movement of the cart and the manipulation of the pail can be eliminated if stalls are equipped with units attached to one central machine with pipes running from each stall to the milk room.

Habits

(The cow may begin to show bad habits. She may suck her own teats or those of other cows. Secure a metal anti-sucking device and fasten it in the cows nostrils, or put a halter on her, and on the halter strap a nose strap covered by another strap through which sharp nails point outward. She may kick: secure a set of hobbles and fasten these on her legs.)

Birthing

Lawdy, Lawdy, them was tribbolasuns! Wunner dese here womans was my Antie en she say dat she skacely call to min he e'r whoppin' her, 'case she was er breeder woman en' brought in chillun ev'y twelve mont's jes lak a cow bringin' in a calf....

Martha Jackson, b. 1850, in Alabama Narratives

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Mary has wept! Mary has wept!... Weeping is fecund. There never has been a sterile tear. As the rain that falls from on high irrigates the countryside and prepares it to receive in all fertility, the crops and seed and fruit that will in time come to ripeness, so it will happen in the realizing of the spirit.
Archbishop of Syracuse, Il Pianto di Maria a Siracusa

Every twelve months the cow should be calved. (When the young girl is bleeding at her time of the month, she hides her condition, she is careful that no blood shows on her clothing.) Her peak period for the production of milk (When the woman has a child growing in her womb she may hide this or she may hide herself) occurs between the third and eighth week after calving. (She may speak of a child, but she does not speak of her womb or vulva.) After this period, the production of milk declines daily. (During labor, she lies in a room alone.) A cow should be permitted (At certain times the pressure of her blood is measured) to remain dry (or the beat of the heart of her child is listened to or the width) for four to eight weeks (of her cervix is calibrated) after calving. (She is denied any relief of her pain. Or she is drugged until she seems to sleep. She is told that in a wakened state she may be dangerous to herself or to her child.) The productive life of a dairy cow is from 3.6 to 7.5 years. (The pain of our labor is imaginary, it is our nature to be hysterical, we are told, the pain of our labor is natural, it is in our nature to suffer, we hear. The pain of our labor is pleasure, this is how we become women, it is said.) And the average productive life of a cow lasts five years. (During the birth her feet are put in metal stirrups.) After this, the cow is no longer worth her keep.

The Calf

I never saw my mother, to know her as such, more than four or five times in my life; and each of these times was very short in duration, and at night. She was hired by a Mr. Stewart who lived about twelve miles away from my home. She made her journeys to see me in the night, traveling the whole distance on foot, after the performance of her day's work. She was a field hand, and a whipping is the penalty of not being in the field at sunrise. ... I do not recollect of ever seeing my mother by the light of day.

Frederick Douglas, An American Slave

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When the calf is born (her hands are strapped to the table) she is allowed to remain with her mother for twenty-four or in some cases thirty-six hours. (She may not touch the infant during birth.) The calf drinks the colostrum, the first milk (The doctor who delivers the child does not look on her; he covers her vulva with a sheet and feels under the sheet for the head of the infant) she is separated from her mother and placed in isolation from any grown cow. (Or he shines a bright light between her thighs but does not allow her to see his hands as they turn inside her.) On rare occasions a calf may be allowed to run with her mother in the fields. But normally separation is necessary so that the calf will learn to drink from a pail. Teaching this is a difficult task; all food must be withheld from the calf for twenty-four hours. Then place your fingers in her mouth and she will suckle, and then this hand with the calf's mouth around it must be placed in the bucket of milk (And when the child is born) and then the calf will suck in some milk. (it shall be given the name) She may raise (of the father) her head from the bucket and refuse to drink. Again fingers must be placed in her mouth. We lie alone again her head must be placed in the bucket. The pains come on. They come closer and closer together. Some of us cry for our mothers. Some of us scream angrily at God. We are strapped down. We are injected with substances. Some of us are frightened. Some of us die. We grow sick. We lose consciousness; pain carries us away.

The Cows Speak

At the sight of their mothers the calves skip so wildly that their pens can no longer hold them; they break loose, lowing all the while and gamboling.

Homer

We are the cows. With our large brown eyes and our soft fur there was once something called beauty we were part of. It is this we remember when we bellow. When we stand still and gaze at you. Our noses were wet, we know that, we know we once nuzzled you as you pulled with your hands on us, as the milk rushed warm against our bellies, rushed through us, sighing, sighing within us as it flowed, or as the tongues of our calves licked our teats and our skin shivered, and the calves mouth closed over us, and we remembered the shaking body as it slid from our thighs, and as we licked it, amazing and new, over its skin, licked it clean, as it now licks us, nuzzles us, its brown eye staring into our eye, skin and fur, one against the other, the one and the same, one

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Bottle feeding

shiver, and one sigh, one warm rush of sweetness in the mouth, and the soft bodies, growing nightly, soft against ours, to run with us, we remember what we were then, what it was then to be part, to be part of our beauty.

We Are Mothers

A woman who weeps always becomes, in the very act, a mother, and if Mary weeps beside the cross of Jesus - I can tell you that her weeping was fertile and made her a mother.

Archbishop of Syracuse, Il Pianto di
Maria a Siracusa

When we awaken, there is a child given to us. We are mothers. We feel pain where the vulva has been cut. We are mothers. We feel that the skin of the child is soft. The face to us in sleep is beautiful. The small body lying against our body vulnerable. The cries move us. Secretly we remove the child's clothing, the blanket, the diaper. We fondle the body. We love this body, because we are part of the body. We are mothers.

We are heavy with bodies. If men bore children, we imagine, they would burst from their heads, not their asses, and be fully grown, and dressed, and godlike, with no need to eat, no substance pouring from their substance. But we are mothers. (She is a great cow. She stands in the midst of her own soft flesh, with hips wide enough for calving; who lays open her flesh, like a drone, for the use of the world.) And we labor. We labor like ...

All about nappies

What makes
this silicone teat
better
than any other?

Breast feeding

When breastfeeding
mums need a little help

The WEB

Genoveffa Corea

from "Dominance and Control: How Our Culture Sees Women, Nature and Animals" (Agenda Magazine May/June 1984)

...When I see the dominance/submission pattern of man's relationship to animals, the way in which he reduces the animal to an object, a tool for his use, I understand the horror of that pattern for the dominated "object". I have lived it. I am living it.

...Like the air, the earth and the water, like the animals, woman is seen as an object to be controlled and manipulated for the ends of man. Her complex being is reduced to two functions which man decides she exists to serve for him: sexual and reproductive.

Women know the obscenity of domination... On some level, we identify with animals. Indeed, throughout most of patriarchal history, women and animals shared a common legal status. We were chattel or moveable, animate property. Men owned slaves, cattle, concubines, beasts of burden, wives -- all chattel.



Today we recognise it when we are being treated as animals are treated. One example from The Burning Bed by Faith McNulty:

Francis Hughes, acquitted in a celebrated trial of murdering the ex-husband who had beaten and tortured her for years, said of him: "He'd hit me until I ran out of the door and the he'd come after me, chasing me. I felt like a hunted animal; stumbling in the dark in the yard, mud squishing under my feet, my heart pounding, just scared to death. I know what an animal feels when it is hunted."

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Book Review

Rape of the Wild

By: Andree Collard with Joyce Contrucci

Rape of the Wild is a fascinating book. It is a book that the feminist, environmental, and animal rights movements have always needed, to draw the connections between them, and bring them closer together. All of these issues are much clearer when placed in the context of one another.

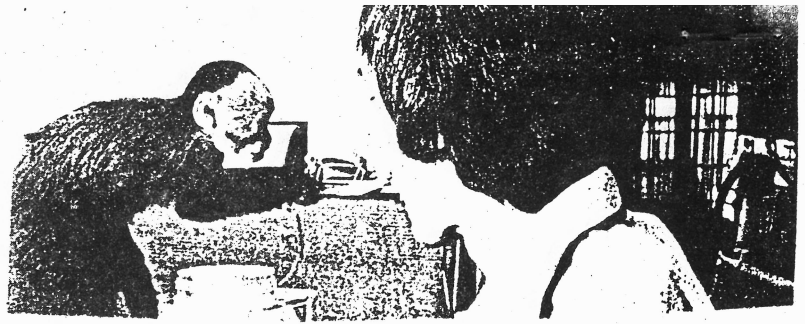
The book covers many topics. Firstly, Collard points out that it is wrong to assume that all cultures have consistently developed along patriarchal lines; that many cultures originate from matriarchies where goddesses and 'Mother Earth' have been revered above masculine symbols. Such worship was, however, suppressed and subverted deliberately. For example, the story of Gilgamesh has been called a great work of art, and of course the first writings of its kind. However, it has far greater significance than that; it also signifies "Goddess murder". Collard says: "Because the epic is based on undoubtedly much older gynocentric Sumerian material, it is invaluable as evidence of the overthrow of goddess worship and the institutionalisation of the patriarchal ethos 'might is right'." [page 20].

Through this kind of macho mythology, and the glorification of the hunt, masculine dominance eventually became an accepted part of culture, as it is today. Collard discusses how traditional anthropologists see hunting as the original "mover of culture", and how this is a sexist assumption as it only values masculine 'contribution' to society. She points out that the hunt succeeded in creating a society where not only animals were made victims of systematic oppression, but women also. As men learned to run faster and women grew broad-hipped to give birth to larger brained babies, "In this new social arrangement, women could be raped at the whim of the male who 'selected the time and place', especially if she could not run as fast as he could. ... In short, like the animals he allegedly hunted, she had become fair game." (page 37).

Apart from the history of the development of patriarchy, Collard looks at the way language can inhibit our experience of the world by defining our outlook on life subtly. She also shows us that hierarchical and

Women in the wild

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analytical language is not characteristic of all cultures, and that "holophrastic"* language usually identifies cultures who live more harmoniously with nature than western cultures do. She also looks at the way nature is degraded in language, and how words used to describe nature as second rate, compared with technology and all things man-made, are often also root words relating to women and femininity.

A large part of the book gives information about the conditions under which many animals live and die today, and it is argued persuasively that comparisons can be made between the ways in which both women and animals are oppressed. Reproductive technologies are discussed at some length, the ways that they have been used in the "farm" and laboratory, and how they exploit women. "The scientists' gift of life is presented with a paraphernalia of hormonal stimulants, Playboy magazines to stimulate ejaculation in the man, petri dishes, ultrasound monitors, laparoscopes, laser surgery, etc. It contains the poison that ensures the death of woman's link to nature. ...Temporarily she has managed to dispel the castration fears of the fathers and to deflect their hostility by surrendering her womb into their hands." [page 108]. Thus such technologies rob a woman of her autonomy, and play on the fears (deliberately instilled by patriarchy) of sterility and how this relates to being a 'real woman' and 'good wife'.

The next step from manipulation of the process of conception and birth, is the control of what is actually conceived/born. This is called eugenics. The horrors of genetic manipulation are already a well established reality for farm and laboratory animals, whose bodies and reproductive capacities are manipulated to such and extent that nothing of the original conception, pregnancy and birth processes are left. This has become an integral part of modern farming methods, to ensure 'top quality offspring'.

And it seems that a similar fate may be in store for humans unless something is done in the near future to stop this violation. For example, Robert K. Graham opened the 'Graham Repository for Germinal Choice', where he collects the sperm of Nobel prize winners, to use for artificial insemination. " 'He does not provide valuable sperm to just any interested or smart [married] female; he thinks that only one of every fifty women is qualified to bear the children of Nobelists.' " (page 117). Another 'Nobelists', William Shockley, suggested sterilisation programs for welfare

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recipients. "Needless to say, welfare recipients are for the most part female, black, unschooled and very poor" (page 118).

The assumption by the men in both of these examples is that 'Nobelists' are somehow superior to other 'less intelligent' people, and that they have more rights, particularly in terms of reproduction. This is not surprising considering that they are mostly white, middle class and male. As a result, these men, (obviously needing Woolf's metaphoric mirror), seem to want to create a uniform society, with themselves as the model; if this is achieved, and with a little help from reproductive technologies, perhaps then women can be dispensed with altogether, when genetic engineers have found a more efficient way to reproduce themselves.

For these reasons and more, Collard warns women against the use of reproductive intervention. She argues that maintaining our link with nature is essential to maintaining our integrity, particularly by resisting the control and paternalistic 'protection' patriarchal science offers us.

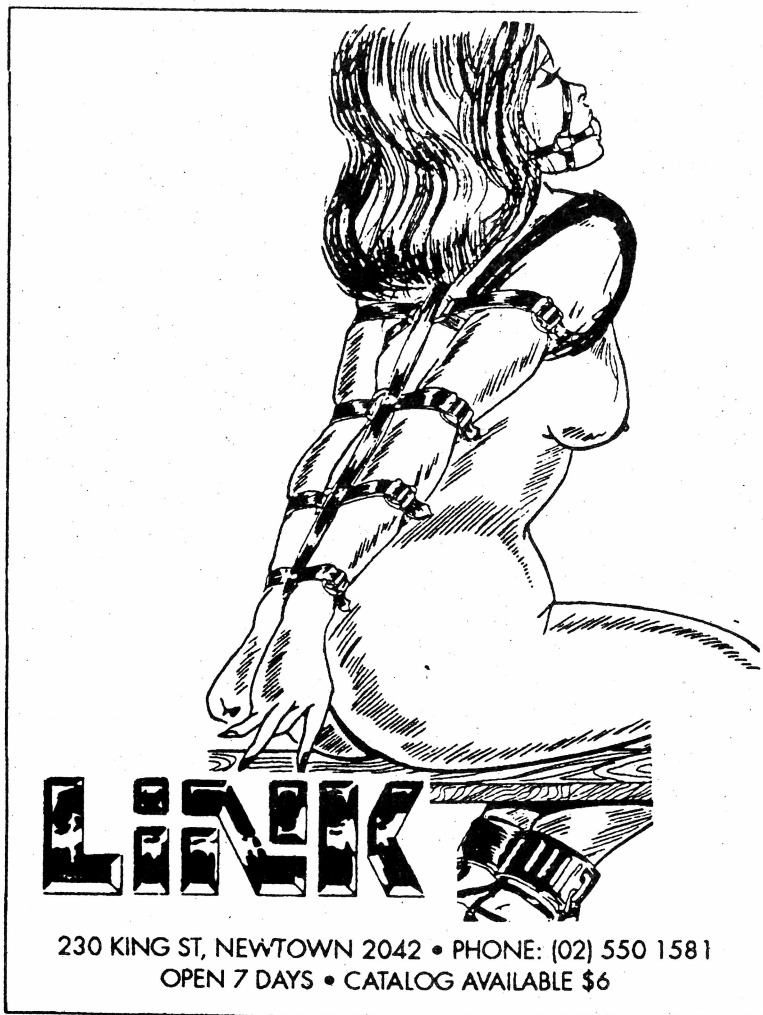
Rape of the Wild is published by the Women's Press. If you are unable to find a copy at your local bookshop/library, write to our post office box, and we'll try to find you one.

* According to Collard, a holophrase : "verbalisesthe way a healthy mind perceives experience and expresses it without separating emotion and reason, feeling and thought, self and non-self."



Soviet pioneer of transplant failures, Demikof, implanted a second head on a German shepherd. The two heads of the pain-crazed monster kept attacking each other and on the 29th day the misfit had to be killed.

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Above : Woman with arms, legs and mouth bound. Advertisement for Link Leather (shop selling leather clothing, bondage and discipline paraphernalia).

Dog is held in a restraining device for experimental purposes. Its vocal chords have been severed to make the dog mute.

